



**NHD**  
NATIONAL  
HISTORY DAY

## National History Day in Kentucky

National History Day in Kentucky (NHDKy), the state affiliate of National History Day, challenges students in grades 4 through 12 to think like historians. Students choose their own topics and conduct their own research in primary and secondary sources. They can work in a group or individually, depending on the format they choose for their final project, and they have the option to present their findings in NHDKy competition. Competition is not required, however. Instead, students might arrange to present their work in the school or in a local historical organization or library.

The Kentucky Historical Society coordinates this adaptable academic program. It is one of many activities from which Kentucky Junior Historical Society groups can choose, but students *do not* have to be KJHS members, to participate.

As NHDKy coordinator, KHS

- Provides assistance to you and your students
- Hosts regional contests
- Hosts the Kentucky state contest
- Accompanies students to the national contest at the University of Maryland

While KJHS membership is not required for NHDKy participation, it does carry NHDKy benefits:

- Free classroom visit by NHD state coordinator to discuss NHD
- Reduced regional and state contest registration fees
- Free field trips to KHS for a primary source learning activity
- Free admission to an NHDKy project workshop at KHS where they will receive feedback on their projects prior to regional competition and will leave with at least three suggestions for next steps

KJHS membership deadline is Oct. 15, 2015. Annual dues are \$10. If you would like your students to benefit from KJHS membership, learn more at [history.ky.gov/kjhs](http://history.ky.gov/kjhs) or contact Cheryl Caskey, [cheryl.caskey@ky.gov](mailto:cheryl.caskey@ky.gov) or 502-564-1792, ext. 4461. Cheryl also is your contact for NHDKy.

Whether your students are working on an NHDKy project as a classroom activity or an after-school KJHS club activity, the materials in this booklet will help your students navigate the project preparation process — from understanding the theme to picking a topic and writing a thesis statement — and prepare for competition.

# Table of Contents

NHD / NHDKy Competition Basics.....	3
KJHS Regions .....	4
Learning Targets.....	5
Tips for Creating Your Classroom Calendar.....	6
Suggested Pacing and Assignments for Projects.....	7
Project Examples .....	9
Samples for Classroom Use .....	10
Calendar.....	11-16
Research Project Sample Lesson Plan .....	17-18
Think Like a Historian: Using History Day Themes to Inspire Classroom Assignments .....	19-26
Topic Selection Activity.....	27
Project Registration Sheet .....	28-29
Lesson Plan: Understanding and Writing a Thesis Statement.....	30-32
Tackling the Thesis Statement.....	33-35
Thesis Development Student Worksheet.....	36-38
Grading Rubric: Thesis Statement .....	39
Primary Source Analysis.....	40
Primary Source Worksheet.....	41
Area Archives / Libraries.....	42
Project Organization Chart .....	43
Sample Grading Rubric for In-Class Use .....	44
In-Class Exhibit Design Activity .....	45-46
Contest Rules and Preparation .....	47
Rules Verification Checklists .....	48
NHDKy Judging Policy .....	49-50
NHDKy Contest Advancement Policy.....	51
Frequently Asked Questions.....	52-54

# NHD / NHDKy Competition Basics

NHDKy follows NHD project and contest rules. You'll find NHD contest information at [nhd.org/entering-contest/#toggle-id-1](http://nhd.org/entering-contest/#toggle-id-1). (When viewing in PDF format, that and all other links in this document are live.)

## Presentation Formats

- Paper (individual only; group work not allowed)
- Exhibit
- Website ([www.nhd.weebly.com](http://www.nhd.weebly.com) is the required program for website development)
- Performance
- Documentary

## NHDKy Divisions

There are three divisions for NHDKy:

### Youth Division: Grades 4-5

This division is exclusive to NHDKy. These elementary students may compete in regional and state competition but cannot advance to the national contest because there is no division for them at that level. NEW: Students in this division **must** compete at a regional NHDKy contest in order to compete at the state contest.

### Junior Division: Grades 6-8

### Senior Division: Grades 9-12

These divisions align with NHD divisions.

Students in all three divisions may

- Work individually or in a group of up to five students
- Complete a project in any of the five presentation formats.

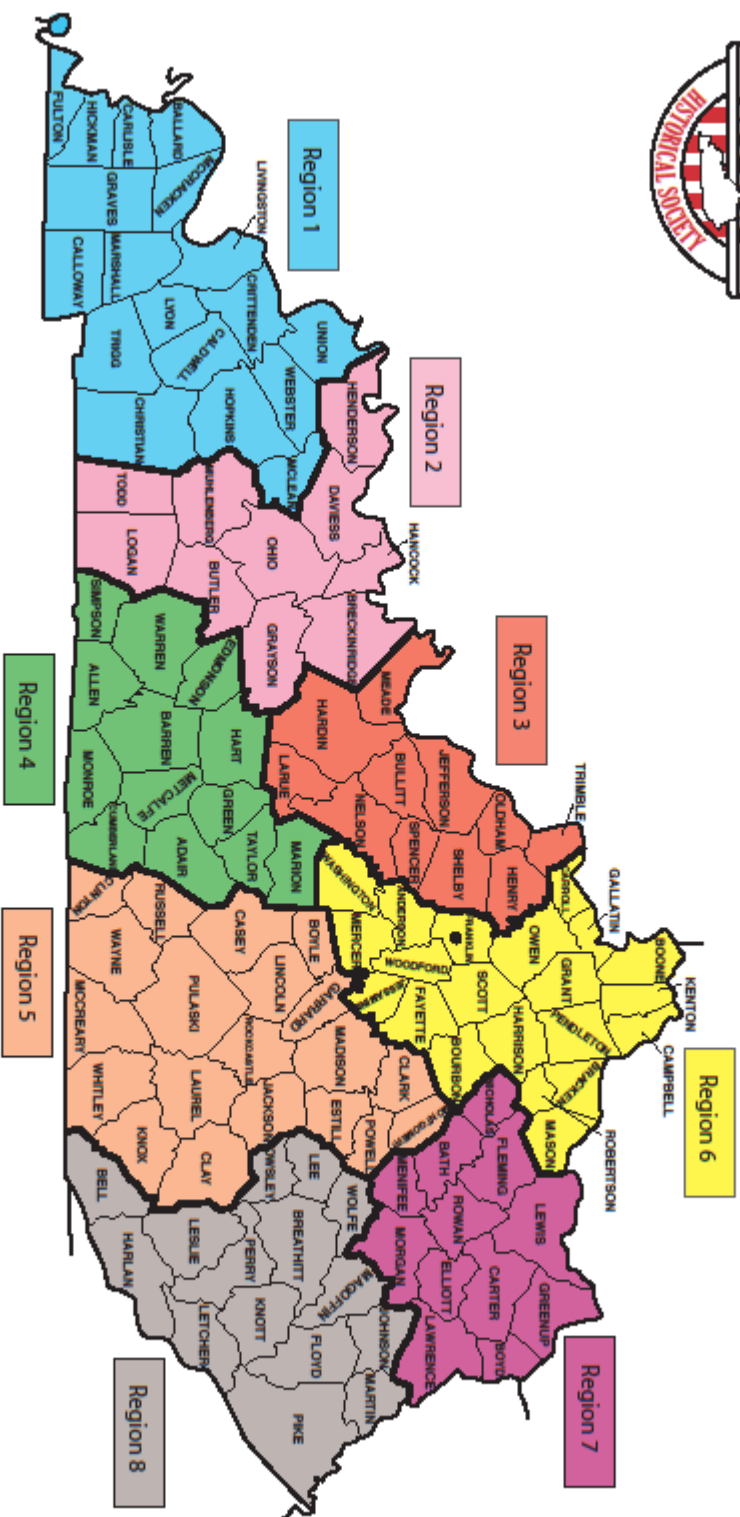
The 2015-2016 theme is:

## Exploration, Encounter, Exchange in History

All NHDKy projects must relate to this theme. NHD explains the theme at [nhd.org/contest-affiliates/annual-theme/](http://nhd.org/contest-affiliates/annual-theme/).



## Kentucky Historical Society



## Kentucky Junior Historical Society Regions

NHD Regional Contests follow KJHS regions.

# Learning Targets

How does a historian think? Analytically. Critically. Broadly. By the time your students complete their NHDKy projects, they should be able to check off these learning targets.

- ☐ I can pose research questions about a topic in history.
- ☐ I can gather and organize a variety of primary and secondary sources related to my research question.
- ☐ I can analyze primary and secondary sources for credibility and bias.
- ☐ I can suggest possible answers to my research questions.
- ☐ I can write a thesis statement related to the History Day theme, taking a position on my topic.
- ☐ I can organize primary and secondary sources in a format that tells a historical narrative.
- ☐ I can organize primary and secondary sources in a format that proves my thesis statement.
- ☐ I can draw conclusions from my research findings and explain the impact my topic has on history.
- ☐ I can present and cite sources in an annotated bibliography.
- ☐ I can compose a process paper that explains how I selected my topic and conducted my research.

# Tips for Creating Your Classroom Calendar

You can apply these tips for creating your classroom calendar to an in-school or after-school program design.

- Start the calendar with the first day of your school year
- End the calendar with the 2016 NHD National Contest June 12-16, 2016 (Hey, shoot big. You never know.)
- Include these dates:
- Your school or local contest (if you have one) for sharing student projects with their peers, other teachers and administrators
- Your regional contest (The following are scheduled so far for 2016.)
  - March 5, University of Louisville
  - March 12, Morehead State University (tentative date)
  - March 26, Eastern Kentucky University, Richmond
  - TBD, Paducah Tilghman High
  - TBD, Northern Kentucky University, Highland Heights Campus
  - TBD, Kentucky Wesleyan University, Owensboro
- The state contest (April 30, 2016. The KJHS Annual Conference will take place on April 29, 2016.)
- Your school's winter/spring breaks, religious holidays, state testing weeks and any other days you know when student work will be limited.
- When you will introduce NHD to your students.
- When students will propose topics to you.
- When you will attempt to reserve time in your school library / computer lab / media center.
- Interim deadlines when students will submit research / annotated bibliography phases to you (don't stress, we'll help you through this).
- Interim deadlines when students will submit evidence of their research.
- When students will submit their project in pieces / phases for peer or teacher feedback.
- When complete drafts are due for all students.

A Sample Calendar, which may be adapted, starts on page 10.

# Suggested Pacing & Assignments for Projects

## **Introduction to National History Day      Week 1-2**

- Explain what NHD is, the theme, and what student expectations will be
- Introduce thesis statements, primary and secondary sources, and annotated bibliographies – provide examples of each for students
- Introduce sample topics – these can come from content you intend to teach through the semester or year
- Topic selection activity – have students bring in a newspaper or magazine and point out topics that relate to the theme.

## **Article analysis/Preliminary topic chosen      Week 2-3**

- Have students determine their broad topic of interest and choose and read two articles/chapters related to it.
- Their response to the sources should identify and describe the author's thesis, evaluate their use of evidence (i.e. what stats, examples, data support their thesis), and explain if the author was successful or not.
- They should address how the article/chapter helped them in their research.

## **Primary Source Analysis      Week 3-4**

- Introduce students to places to find primary sources: public and university libraries, Library of Congress, National Archives, Kentucky Historical Society, and Chronicling America.
- Have them find at least two primary sources related to their preliminary topic.
- They should read and analyze the sources and write an annotation for them.
- Their annotations should address: the type of source, its subject, bias of the author, and how it supports their research.

## **Article/Source Analysis      Week 4-5**

- Students should find two more secondary and primary sources each as related to their topic.
- They should be beginning to narrow their topic focus.
- They should submit annotations for each source.

## **Final topic and initial thesis      Week 5-6**

- Students should have narrowed their focus from their initial broad topic.
- They should submit a provisional thesis statement

- Students should submit a revised annotated bibliography for the eight sources they have up to this point.

**Revised thesis/article analysis**

**Week 6-7**

- Students should submit annotations for two more primary and secondary sources each.
- They should submit a revised thesis based on your feedback.

**Outline**

**Week 7-8**

- Thesis statement
- Main supporting points with topic sentences
- Should include which primary sources will be their evidence
- Annotated bibliography

**Rough draft of paper**

**Week 9-10**

- Five- to seven-page paper that has a thesis, three to five supporting points, conclusion, and annotated bibliography
- This paper will provide the text for whatever project type they choose.

**Final draft of paper**

**Week 10-11**

**Determine project type**

**January**

**Work on projects**

**January/February/March**

**Competition**

**March/April**

# Project Examples

These examples are from Kentucky participants (click while viewing in PDF to open them). You can also see examples from [National History Day](#).

## Paper Examples

[Junior Division 2015](#) (Loving)

[Junior Division 2015](#) (India)

[Junior Division 2015](#) (Communists)

[Senior Division 2015](#) (Wagner)

[Senior Division 2015](#) (Clay)

[Senior Division 2015](#) (WWI)

## Documentary Examples

[Senior Individual Documentary 2015](#) (YouTube)

[Junior Individual Documentary 2015](#) (YouTube)

[Junior Individual 2013 National Participant](#) (YouTube)

[Senior Individual Documentary 2014 National Participant](#) (YouTube)

[Senior Individual Documentary 2014 National Participant](#) (YouTube)

## Performance Examples

[Junior Individual Performance 2013 National Participant](#) (YouTube)

[Junior Group Performance 2013 National Participant](#) (YouTube)

## Website Examples

[Senior Individual Website 2013 National Participant](#)

The following lesson plans, activities and worksheets are provided as resources for teachers who wish to incorporate NHD into their classrooms.

# Sample NHDKy Calendar (adaptable to your classroom needs)

## October

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10 NHD introduction	11 Discussing Groups  Preliminary Research	12
13	14 Preliminary Research	15 Preliminary Research	16	17	18	19
20	21 Preliminary Research Due	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30 Refining Topics  Skill: Note Taking	31 Topics Due Group Contracts Due		

# November

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7 Initial Research	8 Initial Research	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18 Project Types- Examples of each type of project	19 Project Types- Examples of each type of project	20 Initial Research  Skill: Tracking Sources	21 Initial Research	22 Initial Research	23
24	25 Initial Research  Optional library field trip (your local library or KHS).	26 Initial Research Due  End of Group Trial Period  Project Type Due	27 No School	28 No School	29 No School	30

# December

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6 Research	7
8	9	10	11	12	13 Research	14
15	16 Research  Skill: Bibliographies (Annotations)	17 Research	18 Research	19 Research	20 Research	21
22	23 No School	24 No School	25 No School	26 No School	27 No School	28
29	30 No School	31 No School				

# January

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 No School	2 No School	3 No School	4
5	6	7	8 Research	9 Research	10 Research	11 KHS Work day Bring your project to KHS for assistance
12	13	14	15 Research	16 Research	17 No School	18
19	20 No School	21 Research	22 Research	23 Research	24 Research	25
26	27 Project Creation  Skill: Process Paper	28 Project Creation	29 Project Creation	30 Project Creation	31 Project Creation	

**\*Project Creation Dates are approximate. Some projects (documentaries, performances) require more time to produce.\***

## February

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3 Project Creation	4 Project Creation	5 Project Creation	6 Project Creation	7 Project Creation	8 KHS work day Bring your project to KHS for assistance
9	10 Project Creation	11 Project Creation	12 Project Creation	13 Project, Process Paper & Annotated Bibliography Due	14	15
16	17 No School	18	19	20	21 Optional School History Day Competition	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	

# March

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28 No School	29
30	31 No School					

Course

School Name

Teacher Name / Email

Year / Term

## Research Project Sample Lesson Plan

A major course requirement is that all students complete a historical research project using the guidelines of the National History Day competition. Students may choose to complete a research paper, museum exhibit, dramatic presentation, interactive website, or documentary. Students choose to complete a project as an individual or as a group, however, groups agree to accept one grade.

### 2016 Theme: Exploration, Exchange, Encounter in History

Website: <http://www.nhd.org>

**Step 1: Select a topic (20 points).** You must choose a topic from U.S. history [set any criteria that makes sense to your school / course / time period]. Suggestions will be discussed in class. There are special awards for topics dealing with local or state history. You must choose a topic that is historically important, relates to the theme of the contest, and one in which you have a genuine interest. Complete the entry form and submit no later than **date**. [edit dates as needed- this schedule is designed to have projects complete in early January]. This can just be the preliminary topic and allow time for changes to be made.

**Step 2: Research.** This is the longest phase of the project, and will continue from September through December. Your research is not complete until you have completed the research checklist.

**Step 3: Develop an annotated bibliography.** This should contain sources available at the school and community libraries. You are required to do some research out of school – consider community libraries, college or community college libraries, or other resources in the state and surrounding region (Cincinnati, for example). Interviews and other “outside of the box” sources are encouraged. Internet sources are legitimate, provided they can be authenticated. Wikipedia, about.com, and other “general knowledge” sources are not legitimate resources. Each source must be correctly cited and contain an annotation. Annotations should include 2-3 sentences that address:

1. Is the source primary or secondary?
2. What parts of the source are relevant to your topic?
3. How the source is important to your topic.

**Annotated bibliographies:** NHD requires either MLA or Turabian. A good idea is to consult with your English teacher and see what they will be teaching (if anything) and have your students use that style.

**Date.** Annotated Bibliography – Phase 1 due: three to five sources

**Date.** Annotated Bibliography – Phase 2 due: revised and include another three to five sources.

**Date.** Annotated Bibliography – Phase 3 due: revised and include at least 10 primary sources and five secondary sources

**Date.** Annotated Bibliography – final due

**Step 4: Research Analysis Sheets (25 points)** There are two research checkpoints built in to the

calendar. On a research checkpoint, you need to turn **five research analysis forms**. This is an individual assignment. If you are in a group, you need to divide the sources and turn in individual work. Each sheet needs to contain the appropriate citation and follow the instructions accordingly. The requirements shift from checkpoint 1 to checkpoint 2 – read the directions carefully.

First checkpoint (50 points)     **Date**

Second checkpoint (50 points)     **Date**

Step 5: **Interviews**. You need to attempt to get at least three interviews. Find the contact information on them and turn in your forms by **Date (10 points)**. **Then, try to contact those people. Proof of an attempt to contact these people is due by Date (15 points).**

Step 7: **Develop final plan to complete the project by Date (25 points)**. This is your plan on how to complete the task before the deadline.

Step 6: **Final product (100 points)** The final product must be submitted in its entirety no later than **Date**. All components, including process papers and final annotated bibliographies, will be scored. Exhibits and performances will be scheduled and presented to the class (check the assignment sheet for the schedule).

**Important Dates: If you choose to compete with your project these are the dates you need to know:**

- National History Day in Kentucky Regional Competition at **LOCATION – DATE**
- National History Day in Kentucky State Competition at **LOCATION – (DATE)**
- National History Day National Competition at the University of Maryland, College Park – **June 12-16, 2016**

# Think Like a Historian

## Using History Day Themes to Inspire Classroom Assignments

History day themes are broad enough to present both peril and opportunity for students and teachers. Without narrowing and focusing the themes, students will find they are too broad to develop effective NHD projects. However, their wide-open nature offers students opportunities for boundless creativity, discovery, and connection and teachers the opportunity to use them in the classroom to encompass any number of subjects you choose to teach. The following exercises on interpreting themes will help students practice narrowing their focus—not only for NHD projects, but for review all year long. As students wrestle with these ideas, they begin to think more like a historians.

The activities and thoughts behind these activities apply to any theme, but for the sake of example, we will use the theme *Leadership and Legacy in History*. You can substitute any theme or topic.

In the Classroom:

- Introduce the theme by posting it in your classroom.
- As students become familiar with it, apply it to certain chapters and units.
- Encourage students to think about how they can apply it to what they are reading and learning from you.
- Use the theme in current events discussions.

The key to using History Day themes is to turn them into questions for students. For example, if you were to use Leadership and Legacy in History to discuss the recent Supreme Court decisions regarding both the Defense of Marriage Act and the Voting Rights Act, you might turn the theme into these questions: What impact will that have for people in the future? What happened in the last twenty years to get to this point? Why did we have them in the first place? Who does the decisions affect? Who did the acts affect in the first place?

## Lesson Plan

### History Day Themes for Review — Using Leadership and Legacy

**Grade:** 8 (applicable for any middle school or high school social studies grade)

**Theme:** Incorporating History Day into School Curriculum

**Objective:** Students will be able to decide on a narrow topic question for research after going through a brainstorming process.

**Standards: SS-8-HP:** History is an account of events, people, ideas, and their interaction over time that can be interpreted through multiple perspectives. In order for students to understand the present and plan for the future, they must understand the past. Studying history engages students in the lives, aspirations, struggles, accomplishments and failures of real people. Students need to think in an historical context in order to understand significant ideas, beliefs, themes, patterns and events, and how individuals and societies have changed over time in Kentucky, the United States and the World.

**Time:** Two 60-minute class periods

**Materials:**

- White boards for groups of four (not necessary if not available)

- White board markers
- Class room history book
- Overhead or LCD projector
- Homework example (optional) Mary Tillman article

### Introduction: (10 minutes)

1. In groups of four, have students answer these questions:

**How would you define leadership? How do you define legacy? What are some examples that you can think of that you have as students?**

**List at least four.**

2. After they list four, ask students to choose the one right they believe most important. Have one person from each group share out the name of their person. [this sentence doesn't fit]

3. Next, ask students to draw the following T-Chart. Have them list three consequences or people (s) impacted by their choice in question 2.

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Legacy</u>
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____

4. When groups are finished, have them choose what they deem as the most significant point. Have all groups share out, or only volunteers. Have a representative explain why their group's point is important.

### Activity

5. Explain to students that they will be reviewing their most recent unit (or chapter) through the theme: **Leadership and Legacy**. The students will present an informal review of a certain section of a chapter or unit to the rest of the class.

6. Show students the following "recipe." Each presentation will have to start with it. (This format is one suggested by History Day to help students narrow their topics and to create a title for their projects.)

*Interest:*

*Theme:*

*Topic:*

*Issue:*

*Title:* (Topic + Issue)

To help guide the students, do a “recipe” with one of the individuals that they choose in the beginning of class. Example:

*Interest:* Civil Rights

*Theme:* Leadership and Legacy in History

*Topic:* Anne Braden and Carl Braden

*Issue:* The impact of Anne and Carl Braden on the Civil Rights Movement in the South

*Title:* For the *Title*, students are looking for a creative way to combine their “Topic” and their “Issue.”

Some ideas are:

Southern Patriots

Subversive Southerners

Some possible end results for the *Title*:

*Title:* Southern Patriots: The Legacy of Anne and Carl Braden’s Civil Rights Activism

Subversive Southerners: Anne and Carl Braden’s Fight for Racial Justice in the South

Accidental Leaders: The Legacy of Anne and Carl Braden’s Act of Housing Desegregation

7. You will assign each group the *Interest* and *Theme*. The *Theme* for this particular assignment will be the same for each group. Potentially, students could be given different themes or choose the ones they feel the most appropriate to the material.

For example

*Interest:* Child Labor

*Theme:* Leadership and Legacy in History

*Topic:*

*Issue:*

*Title:*

*Interest:* Environmental Movement

*Theme:* Leadership and Legacy in History

*Topic:*

*Issue:*

*Title:*

Some final results could be:

*Interest:* Child Labor

*Theme:* Leadership and Legacy in History

*Topic:* Lewis Hine's photography and mass media

*Issue:* Documenting the hazards of child labor in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century

*Title:* "The Responsibility to Our Children: Lewis Hine and the National Child Labor Committee"

*Interest:* Environmental Movement

*Theme:* Leadership and Legacy in History

*Topic:* John Muir's Environmental Legacy

*Issue:* Preserving Yosemite

*Title:* Duty to Save the Environment: John Muir and the Establishment of Yosemite National Park

## **Conclusion**

8. How the students present the review is up to you. However, if you want to have the students practice interpreting the theme, you could use current events.

- Have the students find articles that they feel reflect this theme. They can then fill out the rest of the recipe.
- Or give students an article and have them fill out the recipe with the appropriate theme.

## Lesson Plan

### Beyond Biography: Creating Moments that Make a Legacy

This lesson is designed to help students choose a topic to research and narrow their research to a particular event that embodies the topic. It asks students to think about the historical context of their broad topics before choosing a particular subject. This lesson can be used as an end in itself, or as a starting off point for other projects.

**Grade:** 8 (applicable for any middle school or high school social studies grade)

**Theme:** Incorporating History Day Into School Curriculum

**Lesson:** Beyond Biography: Creating Moments that Make a Legacy

**Objective:** Students will be able to, through going through a brainstorming process, decide on a narrow topic question for research.

**Standards:** SS-8-HP - History is an account of events, people, ideas, and their interaction over time that can be interpreted through multiple perspectives. In order for students to understand the present and plan for the future, they must understand the past. Studying history engages students in the lives, aspirations, struggles, accomplishments and failures of real people. Students need to think in an historical context in order to understand significant ideas, beliefs, themes, patterns and events, and how individuals and societies have changed over time in Kentucky, the United States and the World.

**Materials:**

- White boards for groups of four (not necessary if not available)
- White board markers
- Class room history book (this lesson uses TCI's 8<sup>th</sup> grade text)
- Overhead or LCD projector
- Individual in History Brainstorming Handout

**Time:** 30 minutes

**Introduction:**

1. In groups of four, have students answer this question:  
Which famous individuals in history have left a legacy that affects you today?  
List at least four people.
2. After they list four, ask students to choose the one person they think is the most important. Have one person from each group share out the name of their person.
3. Next, ask students to draw the chart on the following page. Have them list three actions of the individual, and a corresponding legacy.

**Historical Context:****Important Events Happening  
at the Same Time****Individual's Actions****Legacy**

---

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

4. When groups are finished, have them choose what they deem to be the most significant point. Have all groups, or only volunteers, share out. Have a representative explain why their point is important. Also ask how the historical context influenced the individual's action and legacy.

**[Homework] Activity**

5. Explain to the students that they do not want to think about the broad biography of a person, but rather focus on a crucial event that shaped the individual's legacy. In order to begin, students will need to research at least three major events in the individual's life in order to help them choose. They do not need to go into great depth at this stage. They just need to be able to discuss a broad overview of the events. After, they will narrow their topic.
6. Have them use the chart on page xx to record their findings.

**Conclusion**

7. The day the homework is due, give students a moment to look over their findings. Have them write on the bottom of the handout what event they feel is the most significant and why. Have them also write how important the historical context is to this event. Have them share this event with one other person. You can ask for volunteers to share their answers.

See example next page.

## EXAMPLE: Historical Figure – Anne Braden

Three Major Events in Your Individual's Life	Individual's Actions	Legacy
U.S. Navy veteran Andrew Wade asked Anne and Carl Braden to help his family purchase a home in a white neighborhood. Jim Crow housing practices prevented the family from doing it directly.	Civil rights activists, Carl and Anne Braden purchased the home and signed the deed over to the Wade family.	Anne Braden was an ally to African-Americans in the Jim Crow era.
White neighbors retaliated with violence against the Wade family. Louisville segregationists accused the Bradens of being Communists. Kentucky charged them with sedition. They were blacklisted from working in Louisville.	The Bradens took jobs as field organizers for the civil rights organization, the Southern Conference Education Fund.	Anne Braden became a respected member of the national civil rights movement, earning praise from leaders like Martin Luther King Jr.
The Bradens are active in the civil rights movement.	Anne begins to mentor southern students who joined the movement and continued to teach and mentor them throughout her life.	Anne Braden was a passionate activist for six decades, and is credited with having “the most forceful and persistent of white voices for racial equality in modern U.S. history.”

Three Major Events in Your Individual's Life	Individual's Actions	Legacy
2.		
3.		

# Topic Selection Activity

**Goal:** To help students understand what makes a valid topic of study for a National History Day Project

**Materials needed:** Historic newspapers and magazines

**Time:** 25-30 minutes

**Activity:** Can be done individually or in groups

- Divide the newspapers and magazines among the students.
- Have them find three to five current events or people that they find interesting.
- Ask them to explain how it relates to this year's theme.

Ask students to identify two more places they can go to find sources for their topic.

# Project Registration Sheet

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Briefly discuss the general topic: *Be as specific as you can at this point. Topics like "World War II" or "The Computer" are too broad to be considered National History Day topics.*

---

---

---

How does this topic relate to the theme?

---

---

---

---

List possible secondary sources:

---

---

---

---

---

Brainstorm possible primary sources:

---

---

---

---

---

List five research questions you will need to address in getting started:

---

---

---

---

---

## Lesson Plan:

# Understanding and Writing a Thesis Statement

### Description

Students learn criteria for a good persuasive thesis statement, evaluate several examples, and write one of their own (can be adapted for specific classroom needs).

### Student Objectives/Learning Outcomes

The student will

- Evaluate sample thesis statements by applying criteria of a good thesis using the suggested NHD rubric.
- Create and critique persuasive thesis statements on a variety of topics.

**Approximate Time Needed:** one to two classroom sessions

### Overview:

#### Setting the Stage/Initial Instruction

Introduce the concept of a thesis statement and compare and contrast it to topic sentences. Working in groups, students examine model NHD thesis statements for what they have in common. The teacher presents a list of criteria for good thesis statements, using the model statements to explain and illustrate each criterion.

#### Learning Activity

The teacher models using the criteria to evaluate and revise/improve a sample NHD thesis statement. Working in pairs, students evaluate a range of statements using the criteria; they select and rewrite three weak statements, improving them to meet the criteria. Working individually, students write two persuasive thesis statements on a topic of their choice.

#### Assessment & Reflection

The teacher monitors discussion during the activity. Students may critique one another's work, revising their own as necessary. The brief writing assignment may be handed in for assessment and credit.

#### Materials Needed

##### Printed Materials

[NHD](#) Thesis Rubric

[How](#) to Write a Thesis Statement handout

[Example](#) thesis statements from previous NHD projects

#### Setting the Stage

Explain to students that today they will be focusing on a very specific skill in writing, but one that will be very important throughout their academic experiences. Ask if they have heard of thesis statements and

invite them to share what they remember. Explain that constructing a good thesis statement is the key to successful persuasive writing.

### **Initial Instruction**

Arrange students in small groups or pairs. Distribute the sample thesis statements. Ask students to read the statements and discuss in their groups what the statements have in common. Invite groups to report out.

Project or handout the rubric for an NHD thesis. Explain each of the criteria and ask students to apply the criteria to the sample thesis statements.

- Ask students to identify the assertion.
- Ask students to identify the supporting reasons.
- Invite students to speculate about what evidence, arguments, or reasoning might be presented in a paper.
- Ask students to give examples of statements that would NOT meet the criteria (e.g., statements of fact that aren't arguable, opinions that are based on personal preference instead of reasons, vague terms, a scope far too large to address in a short paper, etc.).

### **“The Teacher Might Say”: for Initial Instruction/Setting the Stage:**

“Today we are going to talk about a very specific, but very important, skill in persuasive writing. Perhaps some of you already have been introduced to it. It is creating a thesis statement. Have any of you heard this term before? I guarantee you will hear it many, many times throughout your next years in school. Learning to create a strong thesis statement is not easy, and you will be learning how to do it better and better all through high school – even college. Writing one involves choosing and narrowing a topic to investigate and write about; learning enough about the subject to be able to take a stand on some aspect of it and support your position with good reasoning; and finally “boiling down” all that into a sentence (or two) that conveys your assertion and gives your readers a kind of map of your paper. Whew! That’s a lot to ask of a sentence! But once you have your thesis statement, I think you’ll find that you have pretty much written the rest of the paper in your head.

Some of you indicated you had heard the term before. What do you remember about it? [*main idea of a paper, take a pro or con position on an issue, like a topic sentence, but for the whole paper, etc.*] I’d like you to think back to what you know about topic sentences and see how a thesis is similar and how it is different from a topic sentence. Let’s put a Venn diagram on the board to compare and contrast these two ....”

### **Activity**

- Help students learn to exchange ideas and engage in active learning in group situations.
- Arrange students in pairs. Distribute the activity worksheet -----practice chart with sample thesis statements.

Explain to students that they are going to work together to evaluate the statements using the criteria listed. (Which ones would make good thesis statements? Which ones would not? Why?)

Then, they are going to select three and work together to rewrite improved versions. Model the process for students.

Finally, students will write one persuasive thesis statement individually. The teacher may need to prompt students with possible topics such as current issues at school or in the community. **Check for understanding** as students work in pairs to make sure all are able to successfully write two statements on their own.

### **Assessment**

Monitor progress during paired activity. Students may be invited to have a classmate critique their statements, revising as necessary. Papers may be collected for individual assessment and credit.

### **Extension**

Provide opportunities for students to go beyond the initial lesson to develop deeper understanding of issues, further pursue topics that interest them, and put new learning to creative uses.

As homework, ask students to find two or three secondary source articles about their preliminary topic and read them to find the thesis statements. Examples could be shared and discussed the following day. Groups might use the criteria to evaluate or improve the thesis statements.

# Tackling the Thesis Statement

*Adapted from National History Day MN: Short Sweet and to the Point Thesis Statements and National History Day Alaska: Developing a Thesis Statement.*

## Getting started

Topics have been chosen, research is in full swing, students are starting to ponder color schemes and costume choices. That can only mean that the time for one of the most difficult steps in the process is at hand: the writing of the thesis statement.

A thesis statement is a central thought that holds your entire National History Day (NHD) project together. Early in the research process we like to call this a *working thesis*; as you gather your information, this thought can, and probably should, evolve.

The thesis statement, best written when students are in the middle of their research so the statement is based on knowledge but still has a chance to be flexible, helps direct students through their argument and, later, judges and teachers through the project's ultimate point. It is so important, and for a lot of students, so daunting.

By the time you present your NHD project, however, you need to have a concrete thesis that is supported by evidence.

## **Thesis = Topic + Theme + Impact.**

In other words, you are not just introducing your topic, you are creating an argument that expresses your topic's significance and demonstrates how the theme plays a central part.

## Developing a thesis statement

There are no hard and fast rules for thesis-statement writing, but here are a couple of guidelines to ease students' path.

**Keep it short.** Thesis statements should hover between 40-60 words. Too short, and there's not enough information to explain the argument. Too long, and too many details have been included. Plus, if the students are creating an exhibit, and they only have 500 student-composed words to use, it doesn't make sense to use up 100 of those words on just the thesis.

**Include all five W's.** The thesis is the first thing the viewer reads, so we should know immediately the "who-what-where-when" and "why-is-this-important."

**Include the theme words.** Judges and teachers need to know how the topic relates to the theme, especially if the topic is obscure, extremely narrow, or isn't immediately clear in its connection to the theme words.

**Leave facts out, put arguments in.** We don't need to see every detail of the topic in the thesis. Leave those for the project itself. What we need to see in the thesis is the student's argument, or the point he/she is trying to make.

**Write, revise, research, revise.** Students should not use the first draft of their thesis statement, but instead should revise it based on feedback, go back to their research or conduct new research to make sure the thesis is accurate, and then revise it once more.

A thesis statement explains what you believe to be the significance and impact of your topic. Your opinion of your topic should be guided by your research. National History Day says that a good thesis statement:

Addresses a narrow topic;

- Explains what the researcher believes to be the historical significance of the topic;
- Connects your topic to the National History Day theme.

The steps below, borrowed from Wisconsin History Day's *A Student Guide to National History Day*, provides easy-to-follow guidance on developing a thesis statement that relates to the National History Day theme.

**Example 1: "Immigration to Milwaukee."**

This is not a thesis statement yet because it doesn't address a specific, narrow issue related to immigration to Milwaukee. What will the project examine? Health and sanitation in immigrant neighborhoods? Labor issues? The polka? There are thousands of immigration topics that a historian could research about Milwaukee. This topic needs to be narrowed quite a bit before it can be used to build a thesis.

**Step 2: "Lizzie Black Kander and Jewish immigration to Milwaukee from 1880–1920."**

This is a nice and narrow topic, but it's still not a thesis. This phrase expresses no opinion and makes no argument about the significance of Kander and Jewish immigration.

**Step 3: "Lizzie Black Kander used her cooking classes and The Settlement Cookbook to teach Milwaukee's Jewish immigrants about American culture."**

This sentence is close to a thesis statement, but it isn't quite there yet. The researcher now shows an opinion about the purpose of Kander's work, but still doesn't tell us why the topic is significant. What effects did The Settlement Cookbook and her cooking classes have? How did Kander's actions change the lives of Jewish immigrants?

**Step 4: "Through her cooking classes and The Settlement Cookbook, Lizzie Black Kander introduced Milwaukee's Jewish immigrants to American culture, helping them assimilate and avoid ethnic discrimination."**

We have a winner! This thesis looks at a narrow topic, expresses an opinion, and evaluates the significance of the topic. A History Day project based on this thesis statement would discuss Kander's work and show evidence that she helped immigrants assimilate and avoid discrimination.

## Sample Thesis Statements: Do's and Don'ts (From Revolution, Reaction, Reform in History Theme)

**Don't:** Martin Luther was born in 1483. He started the Reformation. *(Fact)*

**Do:** Beginning in 1517, Martin Luther reacted against Roman Catholic religious practices, especially the sale of indulgences, corruption, and the emphasis on salvation through good works. Luther's Reformation succeeded in igniting a religious revolution, creating a new sect of faith, and later bringing change to the Roman Catholic Church.

**Don't:** Emiliano Zapata wanted land reform. Want to know why? *(Fact/Rhetorical)*

**Do:** Under the banner "Reform, Freedom, Law and Justice" Emiliano Zapata commanded revolutionary forces in southern Mexico to uplift agrarian peasants through land reform. Zapata's role in the Mexican Revolution helped foster a new constitution in 1917 which was later used to redistribute property to the nation's rural poor.

**Don't:** Franklin D. Roosevelt created the New Deal. Read more below. *(Fact/Incomplete)*

**Do:** In response to the stock market crash of 1929, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt initiated a revolutionary "New Deal." This government reaction brought reform to the U.S. banking system and helped get Americans back to work. Roosevelt's goal of restoring economic stability would go unmet, however, until the country mobilized for war.

**Don't:** Without Norman Borlaug's Green Revolution, billions of people would have died. *("What if?" history that cannot be supported with evidence)*

**Do:** Beginning in 1944, Dr. Norman Borlaug conducted research surrounding disease-resistant wheat varieties. His successes in agricultural reform sparked the Green Revolution in several developing nations struggling with starvation. Reaction to Borlaug's work has been mixed as farming practices have accomplished higher yields while also undermining small scale farms and presenting negative environmental impacts.

**Don't:** Adolph Hitler was an evil man that killed a lot of Jews. *(Opinion)*

**Do:** International reaction to the atrocities of the Holocaust led to a reform of the Law of Armed Conflict through the Geneva Convention of 1949 to include the protection of civilian persons in a time of war. The Fourth Geneva Convention laid the groundwork for international humanitarian law and is used to regulate and enforce war time crimes even today.

# Thesis Development Student Worksheet

Name \_\_\_\_\_

After you have found your preliminary topic, it's time to begin crafting your thesis statement. The thesis statement ultimately is what you are trying to argue about your topic. It should express your topic's significance and demonstrate a relationship to your theme. While the thesis is the central thought that holds your NHD project together, you should not begin work on it until you are midway through your research. This ensures that you have done enough research to form an argument, but allows you flexibility to change your thesis as you conduct further research. A thesis statement can and should evolve throughout your research. By the time you have your final draft ready for presentation, you should have a concrete thesis supported by evidence.

A thesis statement can be thought of as a cause-and-effect statement (this happened because of this). You should be mindful of including in your thesis statement the "why" of it all, as well as the straight facts.

Answering the 5 W's can help you put together a solid thesis statement.

Who? (Who was involved? Who was affected?) Name as many people, groups, organizations that you can.

What? (What happened? What was the main event?) Describe in your own words as fully as you can in two sentences.

Where? (Where did the event or actions take place?) If it took place in more than one location list as many as you can.

When? (When did it happen? How long did it last? Was it during a particular decade, century, time period? Was it during or does it relate to any particular war or series of great events?)

Why? (Why did it happen? What caused the event or events to happen? What led up to the event or actions in your topic?)

Why is it important? (What were the results of the event? What impact has it had on people or history?).

## **THEME: Exploration, Encounter, Exchange in History**

**Work on your thesis: You may want to start with the main event and then write the first and last part afterward.**

### **Background information**

---

---

---

---

---

### **Main Event or Action**

---

---

---

---

---

### Results or Impact on History

---

---

---

---

---

Can you prove it\_\_\_\_? How? Explain.

---

---

---

---

---

Try re-writing your thesis a time or two after you've shown it to other people.

The following is an example of a rubric you might want to use after students develop their theses statements.

## Grading Rubric: Thesis Statement

Student Name: _____		
English Teacher: _____ Hour: ____ Social Studies Teacher: _____ Hour: ____		
<b>0 = No Evidence; 1 = Incomplete Evidence; 2 = Evident; 3 = Clearly Evident;</b>		
<b>Requirement: WRITE FINAL THESIS STATEMENT ON BACK OF THIS PAPER</b>	<b>Student Self-Evaluation:</b>	<b>Teacher Evaluation:</b>
I.) Thesis includes all elements of the theme.	0 1 2 3	0 1 2 3
II.) Thesis states the main topic.	0 1 2 3	0 1 2 3
III.) Thesis clearly states the impact of the topic.	0 1 2 3	0 1 2 3
IV.) Topic placed in relevant historical context.	0 1 2 3	0 1 2 3
V.) Important who, what, when, where, why included.	0 1 2 3	0 1 2 3
VI.) Thesis is between 40 and 80 words in length.	0 1 2 3	0 1 2 3
VII.) Technical details all correct (no I, we, they, us)	0 1 2 3	0 1 2 3
	Total: _____	Total: _____
Student Signature: _____	Parent Signature: _____	

## Grading Rubric: Thesis Statement

Student Name: _____		
English Teacher: _____ Hour: ____ Social Studies Teacher: _____ Hour: ____		
<b>0 = No Evidence; 1 = Incomplete Evidence; 2 = Evident; 3 = Clearly Evident;</b>		
<b>Requirement: WRITE FINAL THESIS STATEMENT ON BACK OF THIS PAPER</b>	<b>Student Self-Evaluation:</b>	<b>Teacher Evaluation:</b>
I.) Thesis includes all elements of the theme.	0 1 2 3	0 1 2 3
II.) Thesis states the main topic.	0 1 2 3	0 1 2 3
III.) Thesis clearly states the impact of the topic.	0 1 2 3	0 1 2 3
IV.) Topic placed in relevant historical context.	0 1 2 3	0 1 2 3
V.) Important who, what, when, where, why included.	0 1 2 3	0 1 2 3
VI.) Thesis is between 40 and 80 words in length.	0 1 2 3	0 1 2 3
VII.) Technical details all correct (no I, we, they, us)	0 1 2 3	0 1 2 3
	Total: _____	Total: _____
Student Signature: _____	Parent Signature: _____	

# Primary Source Analysis

## What are primary sources?

- Piece of information about a historical event or period in which the creator of the source was an actual participant in or a contemporary of a historical moment.
- Can be a document, object, place, song, or other cultural artifact created during the historical period you are studying.

## Examples

- Written Documents
  - \* Diaries
  - \* Letters
  - \* Books
  - \* Articles
  - \* Certificates
  - \* Journals
- Artifacts (objects from everyday life that have historical significance)
  - \* Physical remains
  - \* Maps
  - \* Photographs
  - \* Art
  - \* Tools
  - \* Furniture
- Recordings
  - \* Video
  - \* Film
  - \* Audio recordings (songs, hymns, speeches)
- Personal Interviews
  - \* In-person discussions
  - \* Phone discussions
  - \* Email discussions

# Primary Source Worksheet

Directions: Work with your group to answer the following questions about your source. Depending on the source, you may not be able to answer each question completely.

What kind of primary source do you think this is? What makes you say that?

Who created this source? Provide as much information about the person as possible. For example: wealthy man, woman worker, child, freed man, etc.

When do you think this source was created? Try to be as specific as possible if a date is not given.

Who do you think was the author's intended audience? Family member, friend, stranger?

List three things the author said or included that you think are important.

- A.
- B.
- C.

List two things this document tells you about life at the time it was created (clothing, cars, roads, buildings, etc).

What is one question you have about this source?

# Area Archives / Libraries

## Primary Source Resources

### **Northern Kentucky**

[Northern Kentucky University, Special Collections](#)

[Kenton County Public Library](#)

### **Eastern Kentucky**

[Eastern Kentucky University, Special Collections](#)

[Lexington Public Library, Kentucky Room](#)

[University of Kentucky, Appalachian Center](#)

[University of Kentucky, Special Collections and Libraries](#)

[Berea College, Special Collections and Archives](#)

[Morehead State University, Special Collections and Archives](#)

[Southeast Kentucky Community and Technical College, Appalachian Archives](#)

### **Western Kentucky**

[Murray State University, Special Collections and University Archives](#)

[Western Kentucky University, Special Collections](#)

[Campbellsville University, Special Collections](#)

### **Central Kentucky**

[University of Louisville, Archives & Special Collections](#)

[Louisville Free Public Library, African American Archives](#)

[Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives](#)

[Filson Historical Society](#)

### **Southern Indiana/Ohio**

[National Archives Southeast Region \(Atlanta\)](#)

[University of Cincinnati, Special Collections](#)

[University of Southern Indiana, University Archives and Special Collections](#)

# Project Organization Chart

Students can use this to help them organize their information and fill in gaps.

<p><b><u>Background</u></b></p> <p>The basic background for your topic, when it took place, who was involved, this should serve as part of an introduction to your topic.</p> <p><b><u>Build-Up</u></b></p> <p>The contextual background for your topic. What led to the main event?</p>	<p><b><u>Thesis</u></b></p> <p>The most important aspect of your project.</p> <p>The who, what, when, where, why, and how of your topic. Be sure that this relates your topic to the theme. 50 words is a pretty good standard for thesis length, thought going over or under a bit is fine.</p> <p><b><u>Main Event</u></b></p> <p>This is the meat of your project. What is it you are actually arguing for or against? What is the main event that your thesis is about?</p>	<p><b><u>Short-term Impacts</u></b></p> <p>What happened immediately after your main event? Who was immediately impacted? What immediately changed as a result of your topic?</p> <p><b><u>Long-term Impacts</u></b></p> <p>What happened 25, 50, 100 years after your main event? How are society, culture, the economy, people, etc still impacted because of your main event? Why is it significant?</p>
--	---	---

# Sample Grading Rubric for In-Class Use

This chart is adapted from the NHD contest evaluation form and may be used in the classroom to help you assign a grade to students NHD projects.

<b>Judging Criteria</b>	Superior (12)	Excellent (10)	Average (8)	Needs Improvement (7)	Not enough evidence (0-6)
-------------------------	------------------	-------------------	-------------	-----------------------------	---------------------------------

## Historical Quality (60 points possible)

Information presented is historically accurate					
Student writing and cited sources show analysis and interpretation					
Project places topic in broader historical context (before and after main topic)					
Project uses wide research to support thesis statement					
Project uses available primary sources to support information					
Research is balanced and presented in project					

## Relation of Theme (30 points possible)

Project clearly relates the topic to the theme (debate/diplomacy)					
Project demonstrates significance of topic in history					
Project draws conclusions about impact on history					

## Clarity of Presentation (20 points possible)

Project is original, clear, appropriate and organized					
Project accurately uses sources to support thesis					

## Rules Compliance & Complimentary Materials (50 points possible)

Complies with all NHD rules for project					
Annotated Bibliography typed and with project					
Annotated Bibliography separated into primary/secondary sources					
Process Paper and Title Page included with project					
Student presents to judges on time and with all materials					

# In-Class Exhibit Design Activity

This activity will introduce students to some of the concepts of putting together an NHD project and will help prepare them for the Impromptu Exhibit contest at the Kentucky Junior Historical Society annual conference. It encourages students to use critical thinking skills and requires collaboration.

## Objectives:

- Using touchable artifacts or primary source documents (see below for where to sources) students will work in small groups to develop an exhibit.
- Students will think about what kind of story their sources(s) tell and how they will present that to the viewer.
- Students will develop a title, theme, and provide supporting evidence for their exhibit.

**Activity:** This activity can be adjusted to suit your class needs. You can use less objects or arrange your groups in different ways.

**Time:** 45-60 minutes

**Recommended artifacts:** If you do not have access to reproduction artifacts or primary sources, encourage your students to each bring in one object from their home. For example: an old photograph, diary, postcard, doll or other toy, etc. This will introduce students to the different types of primary sources that historians use, but it will also let them see how their own personal items could one day be used by someone to understand their time period and lives.

## Part 1: Collect and Catalog (Critical Thinking)

### **Groups of 2-3:** 1-3 primary sources per group

- Students will imagine that they are creating an exhibit for a museum. They will need to begin with an analysis of their artifact(s) in order to determine where and how it will fit in their exhibit.
- Students will work together to answer basic questions about their artifact(s). They will have to work to come to a consensus about what they believe each artifact is.

Record your responses on the following worksheet.

### **Observation Questions:**

- What is this? Identify the object.
- When, where and how was it made and/or used? How do you know?
- Who used it? Is this always the case?

## Part 2: Interpret (Communication)

**Groups of 5-6:** Combine your smaller groups from Part 1 (and their sources) into larger groups for this part.

Using their now combined artifacts students will need to determine how their artifacts can relate to each other or how they differ.

This will help them to determine how they want to use them in their exhibit.

Use the following questions as guidelines. Record your answers.

**Interpretation Questions:**

- Are these things related? How?
- How are they different?
- Is there a common connection in the people who made or used them?
- Can anyone see other ways these things are related?

**Part 3: Presentation (Collaboration and Creativity)**

**Groups of 5-6: Same groups as in Part 2**

Students now need to put their artifacts together to form their exhibit: They should consider the following questions when arranging their artifacts.

- What do you want the viewer to learn from your exhibit? About a group of people? A time period? A place?
- What are some possible titles (themes) for the exhibition? Be creative and prepare to explain why audiences will want to visit your exhibition. What connections does it make with them?
- What are 2-3 main points that you want to make with your exhibit? Which artifacts support those main points?

Students will then be asked a few questions about their exhibit, such as:

- Why did we do this?
- What could we have done differently?

**Where to find primary sources**

[www.kyhistory.com](http://www.kyhistory.com)

[www.loc.gov](http://www.loc.gov)

<http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/>

<http://www.gilderlehrman.org/collections>

Your home!

The following pages pertain to contest preparation and rules.

# Rules Verification Checklists

NHD requires all participants to complete a “rules verification checklist.” This is the Historical Paper checklist. You can download it and the checklists for other categories at [nhd.org/classroom-connection/nhd-in-the-classroom/#toggle-id-1](http://nhd.org/classroom-connection/nhd-in-the-classroom/#toggle-id-1). We recommend using them with your students one to two weeks before a contest to make sure they have followed NHD rules.



## Rules Verification Checklist – Historical Paper

Student Name	
Paper Title	
Word count of paper	

### GENERAL RULES

✓	Requirement:
	My topic clearly relates to the annual theme.
	This is an original entry. I have only participated in one entry.
	I have researched and written this paper in the last year.
	I certify that this is my original work. I have not used any improper assistance. Credit has been given properly.
	My paper has a title page containing the title of the paper, the name of the author, Junior OR Senior Division, Historical Paper, and the word count of the paper. No other information (school, state, teacher, course) is contained on this page.
	Following my paper, there is an annotated bibliography that contains: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o a complete list of all sources used to create this entry separated into primary and secondary sources</li> <li>o annotations for each entry</li> </ul>
	I understand that using someone else's work without properly crediting it is plagiarism and will result in disqualification.

### PAPER RULES

✓	Requirement:
	The paper is between 1,500 and 2,500 words (including quotations from primary and secondary source documents).
	If I have included an appendix (this is not required), any images in the appendix are directly referenced in the text of the paper.
	I have chosen a method of citation (footnotes, endnotes, or internal citations) and have credited sources throughout my paper.
	My paper is typed or legibly handwritten on 8.5 x 11-inch paper with 1-inch margins on all sides.
	My paper is double-spaced and is printed in 12-point font.
	I have numbered my pages.
	My paper is stapled in the top left hand corner. I have not enclosed the paper in a binder or cover of any kind.

I certify that this National History Day project is the result of my unique academic work. All assistance and sources are properly credited.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# NHDKy Judging Policy

## For Students, Teachers, Parents

### Judging Guidelines

Every effort is made to ensure that judging of the National History Day in Kentucky competition is fair and accurate at all levels. We understand the time and hard work put into each project and while not placing can be disappointing, we do everything possible to inform judges about what to look for in project quality to do their best judging.

Please carefully read the information below to inform yourself about National History Day in Kentucky's policy regarding judging and advancement of projects. It is also suggested that you familiarize yourself with the judging information found in the NHD rule book, which can be found on our [website](#).

### What to do if you have any comments to make about judging:

If you have specific concerns about the process as you observed it, please follow this procedure:

**Submit concerns in writing within 3 to 10 days following a contest to:**

KJHS, 100 W. Broadway, Frankfort, KY 40601

Or, [cheryl.caskey@ky.gov](mailto:cheryl.caskey@ky.gov)

- Any response will be made in writing. No comment shall be made by telephone or through personal contact unless the state coordinator deems it necessary, in which case they will initiate or invite the contact.
- Kentucky Historical Society staff, the state coordinator, nor any official at the NHD national office has the authority to overrule, set aside, or otherwise undermine a judge's decision, and under no circumstances shall a judge's decision be changed. This is true whether a complaint alleges scoring miscalculation, bias, prejudice, or any other error. **All judging is final.**
- Comments and concerns will be taken into account for the next competition cycle and used to improve the judging experience if necessary.

### What to know as a spectator:

- Only judges are privy to all competitors' bibliographies and process papers.
- Judges receive the same instructions at all levels of competition.
- Judges are provided with suggested questions to ask students, but **may** ask questions from that list.
- **Notify a member of the contest staff immediately if a judge asks a personal question of a student (i.e. Where are you from? What school do you go to?)**
- **If we provide equipment and there are issues the day of judging this will not factor into the judges' decision since it was not the fault of the student or group.** Students are being judged on the content of their projects.
- If equipment problems occur, please contact contest staff **immediately** to see if we can help find a solution. Our goal is to give every student entry a fair hearing.
- However, to try to limit such issues we suggest that all students using technology (primarily websites and documentaries) test their projects on a variety of computers and media players.
- **TURN OFF ALL CELL PHONES** while viewing **any** student projects.
- Refrain from cheering during documentaries and performances. Brief applause at the end is acceptable.
- **While walking/waiting in the hallways to view student projects keep your voices down so as**

**not to disturb the judging process.**

- While documentary and performance judging is in process, stay in your seats and do not interject with your opinions.
- **Do not** enter a room while judging is in progress.
- Judges have **absolute** authority to remove disruptive individuals from the judging room and to bar spectators entirely if they deem it necessary to protect the integrity of the judging process.

Thank you for your cooperation!  
National History Day in Kentucky staff

# NHDKy Contest Advancement Policy

## School level contest

- If a school chooses to have a school level contest we do not dictate the number of students or projects they choose to send. However, in schools with 150+ students completing projects it is suggested that schools have some way to determine which of the students and projects will compete at a regional contest.
- We can provide advice for managing a school contest.

## Regional level contest

- Any 4<sup>th</sup>- 12<sup>th</sup>-grade student competing must compete at a regional contest in order to be eligible for state- level competition.
- NEW: Elementary level participation at the regional level will follow the same judging procedures as upper division students. Elementary level students will follow the same advancement policy in place for 6<sup>th</sup>- 12<sup>th</sup>-grade students.
- We advance the top 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of projects in each category and division, with no fewer than three projects advancing to the state level (for example: If there are 35 junior individual exhibits we will advance 12 projects).
- This means that at some regional contests in some categories it is possible for all projects to advance to the state contest because of the number of projects in that category.
- Each student that advances will receive a qualifier medal.

## State level contest

- The national office dictates the number of projects per category and division that we are allowed to advance to the national contest.
- 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> place projects in the Junior and Senior divisions will advance to nationals (for example: the top two junior division individual exhibits or the top two senior division group documentaries.).
- 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> place will also be awarded to elementary division students, but they are not eligible to advance to nationals.

## National level contest

- 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> place in each category in the Junior and Senior divisions are awarded.
- They also award a number of special prizes. These typically have a monetary value.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## From Teachers

### **Do my students have to be members of the Kentucky Junior Historical Society in order to participate in NHD?**

No, it is not a requirement that students be members in order to come to a contest. However, please be aware that membership provides certain benefits and discounts that may be of interest to your students.

### **Can you come visit my classroom?**

Yes, we love engaging with our students and look forward to meeting as many as people throughout the year as possible. We can go over NHD, talk about the theme, topics, thesis statements, finding sources, creating a project, and more. KJHS membership allows this visit to be done for free.

### **Do I have to be at the contest with my students?**

No, there is no requirement that teachers be present at the contests. However, please be sure that your students are prepared for the contest by reviewing the judging and advancement policy, these FAQs, and the NHD rules.

### **Do I have to have a minimum number of students creating projects in order to come to a regional competition?**

Nope. You can bring just one!

### **Is there a maximum number of projects/students that I can bring to a regional contest?**

We ask that schools with more than 150 students working on projects to consider holding a school level contest to determine which projects will advance. We do not manage school level contests, but are happy to provide advice for how to have one.

## About the Contest Rules

*(Always check your contest rule book to make sure you have followed all of the rules for your category!)*

### **With our performance projects, can we have props?**

Yes, in the performance category, props are part of your project. Just remember that sometimes, simple is better.

### **I have been telling my students that five sources (primary and secondary) are a good start to a paper. Do the judges like to see a specific number and would it be better to have more primary or secondary?**

There is no magic number of sources. That's where you as the teacher come in. The requirements for a sixth-grade teacher should be different from an 11th-grade honors teacher. Also, some students will have more, smaller sources while others will have fewer, better sources. A general rule is quality over quantity.

### **I thought projects had to be about topics at least 25 years old. There was a winning project on 9/11.**

There is no official rule as to "how old" a project needs to be. However, it does need to be historical and not a current event. Enough time must have passed for historians to evaluate the event, so that we can understand the historical significance. With a topic like 9/11 you can use your judgment on whether there has been a measurable impact, depending on the approach you choose.

### **Can I appear in my documentary as narrator?**

There is no rule that says the narrator cannot appear on camera. However, you cannot appear in

costume and you cannot reenact a scene. If that is your interest, you may consider a performance instead. Additionally, while it is not against the rules to appear on camera you should remember that part of a documentary is telling the story using images, video, and sound, as well as to showcase your skill at using technology. If you are appearing instead of the sources, this does not necessarily fulfill that goal.

**If I found a quote on a quote website and how would I cite it. This quote was not made by the author of the website but like Thomas Jefferson would I cite this as a website and if so would it only count as one source if I used 2 quotes?**

I would encourage you to find the original source of the quotes — go directly to the source, which can be found in online archives, written diaries/letters, or in valid secondary sources. You have no proof that a quote website is accurate, and when you go to the original source, you often find other good quotes and ideas to help you.

**Can I dress up in costume for my exhibit, website, paper, documentary?**

No, only those competing in the performance category should be in any kind of costume.

## **From Students**

**Can I make changes to my project before the state/national contest?**

Certainly! That's what the judges' comments are for.

**How many projects can go to the national contest?**

The top two projects from each division/category/type qualify for nationals (i.e. The top two Jr. Individual Exhibits). Alternates are chosen in the event that one of the top two cannot attend, but we do not announce alternates at the State Awards Ceremony.

**Do I need to bring a laptop for websites/documentaries?**

We are asking schools to bring at least one device for use between their students as we cannot guarantee equipment at each contest, nor can we guarantee that it would work properly. For documentaries, make sure your project will play on the majority of computers (PC/Mac) and bring a copy of your dvd or flash drive that you can leave with the judges. You will receive it back if you need it.

**Should I email or mail the state coordinator a copy of my paper for the judges?**

Email is the preferred way. Please send your cover page, paper, and annotations as one PDF document. Save the file in this format: "Name of Contest – Division – Title – Student name."

If you need to mail your paper please have it to the state office at least 7 days before your scheduled contest. The address is "KJHS, 100 W. Broadway, Frankfort, KY 40601."

**How many copies of my process paper/bibliography do I need to bring?**

At least two copies: One for each judge. (Websites, yours need to be included in the website).

**What is the dress code?**

No formal dress code, but we recommend business casual. No holes.

**What about the contest? If my group member is not there can I still be judged?**

Yes. But, if you are doing a performance, keep in mind that a missing member could affect the quality of your performance. Please note that those competing in the individual category must be present in order for their project to be judged.

**When can I pick up my exhibit board?**

After judging is completed for everyone, before the awards ceremony begins, or after the awards ceremony ends.

**Do I have to stick around for the awards ceremony?**

Nope. You are free to go after you are judged.

**Should I be nervous?**

Nope, the judges aren't there to scare you. Have fun! Watch a documentary or performance. Support your friends!

**How many projects from each category advance to the state contest?**

For regional contests: We advance the top 1/3 and no fewer than 3 projects in each category/division.

**Is it possible for all projects in a category to advance to the state contest?**

Yes. It will depend on how many projects are actually registered in a category, but typically if a category has fewer than 4 projects it is possible for all to advance (i.e. if there are just 3 Junior Individual Performances at a regional contest then it is possible that all will advance to state contest.)

**What time do I have to be there?**

Registration for all district contests is from 8:30 a.m.-9:30 a.m. Registration for the state contest is 8 a.m.-9 a.m.

**What if I can't be there until our assigned judging time?**

Please let me know as soon as you possibly can if you cannot make it during the registration time.

**When will I get the judges' evaluation forms?**

All evaluation forms will be mailed to teachers the Tuesday following your contest.

**From Parents****Can I be in the room during my child's judging time?**

Only for documentaries, performances, and websites. Judges are allowed to ask audience members to leave before they begin the interview. Only the student(s) and judges are allowed to speak during the process. There will be a time for exhibit viewing after judging is concluded.

**If my child does not stay for the awards ceremony how do we find out results?**

I email each teacher the week following the contest to let them know all results in the event people have to leave before the awards ceremony. Teachers will also receive a packet with all the student evaluation sheets.